Title: Community Partnerships for Interprofessional Education

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Educational Initiative

Purpose
“Community Partnerships for Health Professional Education” aims to create sustainable partnerships with patient organizations that result in community-led educational initiatives for health professional students at the University of British Columbia. The partnerships promote patient-centred interprofessional practice and provide new teaching and learning resources for all health professional programs.

Methodology
Using participatory design, community members, faculty and students collaboratively develop, pilot and evaluate interprofessional community-led workshops. An advisory board of students, faculty and community members oversees the direction and evaluation of the project.

Community partners include the Canadian Mental Health Association, Richmond Mental Health Consumer and Friend Society, BC Epilepsy Society, BC Heart and Stroke Foundation and BC Arthritis Society. Student and faculty collaborators come from Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work, Human Kinetics and Speech Language Pathology.

Results
Preliminary results suggest that workshops led by community (patient) teachers help students bridge theory to practice; provide a safe environment to explore patients’ experiences and health issues ranging from stigma to peer support; and facilitate interprofessional learning. Workshops are suitable for students at different stages in their professional programs. Student interest in the workshops is high, despite scheduling challenges, voluntary participation and community-based locations.

Conclusions
Involving community organizations in interprofessional education is achievable and provides opportunities for important learning that does not take place inside the classroom or clinic.